Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the commercial production of Amorphous Silicon Films for Solar Energy has begun in India as told to the members in Consultative Committee meeting of Science and Technology held on 13th February, 1993; and

(b) if so, the name of location of the firms producing amorphous silicon films alongwith the rates of such films?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY RESOURCES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) and (b) As a part of a national programme for the development of amorphous silicon solar cell technology a pilot plant for the production of amorphous silicon solar cells and modules has been established by the Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources at Gwalpahari in Gurgaon District of Haryana. The plant is at present being operated by Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited and is also being used for further technology development activities. The commercial price of the modules produced in he plant has not yet been fixed.

Infrastructure facilities for Research Programmes

3097. SHRI MOHINDER SINGH LATHER: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether infrastructure facilities to take our various research programmes in the field of Science and Technoligy, have been provided at various places in all the States;

(b) if so, the steps taken for exploiting the resources available there; and

(c) the details of the projects likely to be started in the near future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRONICS AND DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. R. KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) to (c) Yes Sir, through the mechanism of Five Year Plans, the Government has created considerable Science and Technology infrastructural facilities in the form of Science & Technology Institutions, National Research Laboratories etc. under the various Science & Technology departments and Socio-Economic Ministries to undertake research programmes in the field of Science & Technology. In addition Government has also established State Science and Technology Councils in the States and Union Territories for formulation, planning, coordinating and promoting Science and Technology activities at the State level.

Government has provided increased Plan allocations for Science and Technology for the Central Sector Oulay as well as State Sector. Outlay during the Eighth Plan for Science and Technology Programmes which will help in strengthening and modernising infrastructural facilities Several Science and Technology department/agencies have extramural R and D schemes, specific to their areas of operation, which also provide considerable infrastructural facilities to the various educational institutions and research laboratories for undertaking research programmes. The University Grants Commission and Ministry of Human Resources Development have special programmes for strengthening infrastructure for Science & Technology in educational institutions. Government has also recently increased the allocations for overhead expenses on extramural R and D Schemes, which are meant to provide infrastructural support for research and development activities.

Projects approved by the SERC

3098. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR SAHU: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state: